



STAFF HANDBOOK 2023

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CAMP PLAYLAND HISTORY

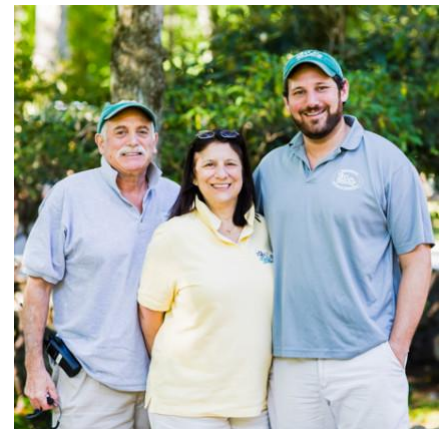


WHERE IT ALL STARTED

Walter and Pearl Bloom and Sy and Adele Breslow founded Camp Playland in 1957. Sixty-eight campers enrolled the first summer. The original facilities included a deep-water pool and Ballfield 1. Our policy has always been to improve Camp Playland every year.

In 1976, Dr. and Mrs. Breslow retired and Gary Bloom became his parents' partner. It was at this time the very successful winter program, Playland Nursery School, was started. In 2011 Steve Bloom joined his parents, Gary & Barbara, in a leadership role.

Today, Camp Playland enrolls over 550 campers daily and has a staff of 250. We are proud of our 18-acre campground and the mutual respect we have developed with our neighbors. We hope to continue our fine reputation throughout Fairfield County.



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE STAND FOR

CAMP PLAYLAND'S PHILOSOPHY

Camp Playland's philosophy has 3 components:

- ❖ Provide a healthy and **SAFE** environment for children
- ❖ Provide a **FUN-FILLED** (**warm, loving, nurturing**) and happy summer
- ❖ Teach new **SKILLS** and help campers to grow and develop self-esteem as individuals and as part of a group

What it means to be: ***"WARM, LOVING AND NURTURING"***

- ❖ Campers are people. Treat campers with respect.
- ❖ Campers need "to feel the LOVE". Campers should know that you like them. Converse with campers at their level.
- ❖ Share yourself with all campers.
- ❖ Validate camper's feelings. Every child deserves a warm hello and a friendly connection every day.



IMPLEMENTING THE PHILOSOPHY

The key to a successful summer is maintaining a positive attitude and planning. From the Director through Assistant Counselors, planning skills to be taught and planning how to organize the groups are most important.

CAMP PLAYLAND STAFF

Good staff members make a good camp! We have GREAT staff members!

Camp Playland is a place where campers and counselors feel physically and emotionally safe. We strive to create a unique environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging, learns life-long skills and forges lasting relationships. Everything that happens at Playland has one core ingredient: FUN! Good Friends + Fun Times = Great Memories! It all starts with our staff! Staff members are selected for their maturity, ability, experience and sincere love for children.

The Playland staff is the key ingredient for a successful summer. For you to be selected to work at Playland you have proven you are a mature, positive and energetic person, a role model and a mentor.

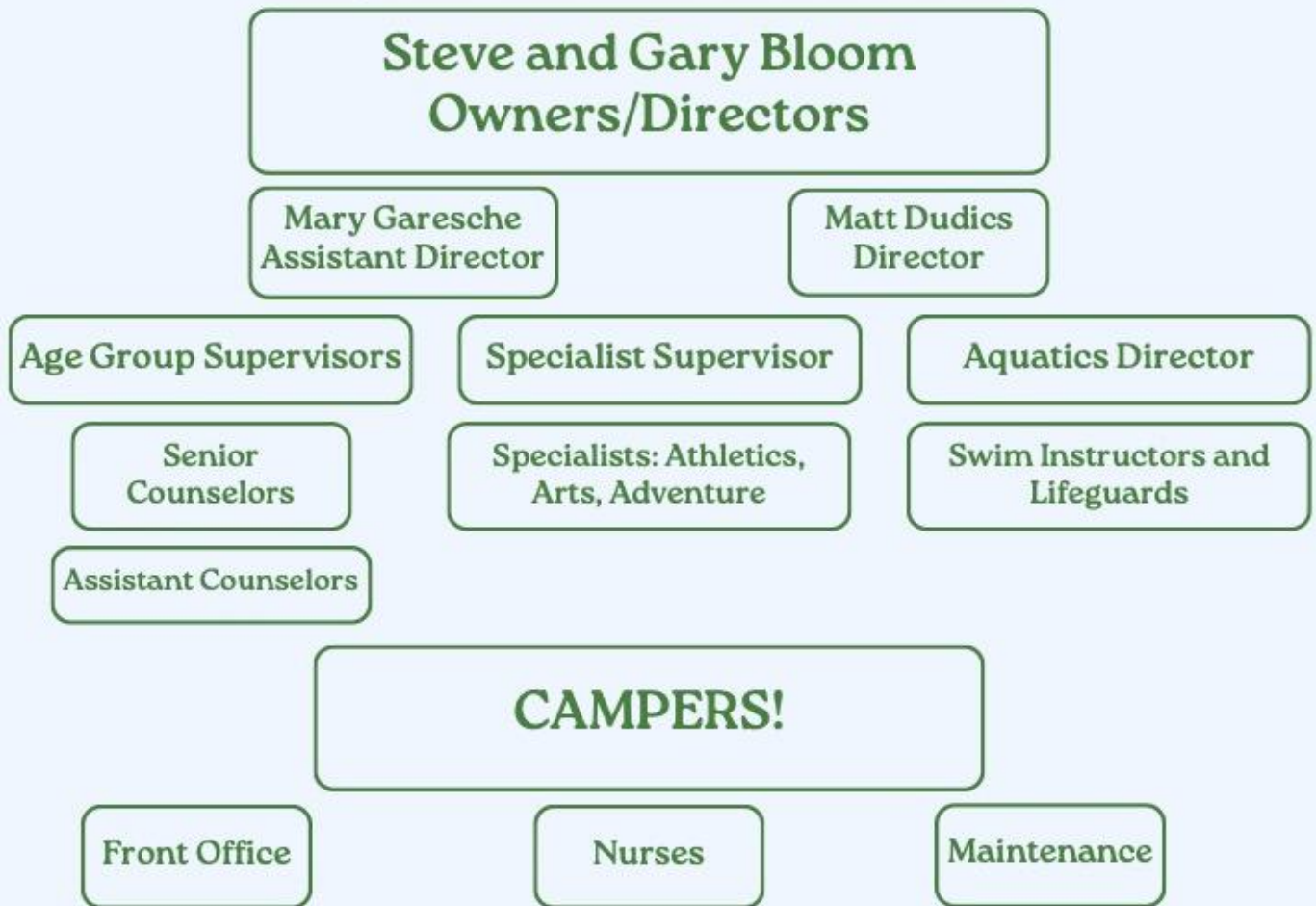
QUALITIES OF A GREAT COUNSELOR

- ❖ Energetic and enthusiastic
- ❖ Willing to learn
- ❖ Adaptable to the camp environment
- ❖ Friendly, helpful and positive
- ❖ Imaginative and resourceful
- ❖ Self confident
- ❖ Dependable, prompt, reliable
- ❖ Responsive to children's needs
- ❖ Strive to be a positive role model
- ❖ Put children's needs and welfare first

EXPECTATIONS OF OUR STAFF:

- ❖ Wear a smile to work
- ❖ Enjoy camp and your campers
- ❖ Work well with all campers
- ❖ Show initiative in camp activities
- ❖ Give positive reinforcement
- ❖ Accept suggestions in a mature fashion
- ❖ Cooperate with fellow staff, work as a team
- ❖ Encourage campers
- ❖ Plan appropriate activities
- ❖ Ask for help

Camp Playland Leadership Structure



RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

All staff members must work together to provide every camper with a positive summer. Playland campers are young and require a professional, nurturing and loving staff. *A good counselor must lead and learn daily.* Counselors should have appropriate expectations for children and other staff members. Establish an environment which creates success. Children must be safe, both physically and emotionally. Be certain to put the campers' best interests first. Counselors must arrive every day ready to work with the children, prepared to be good role models and to exercise compassion and demonstrate empathy. The way a staff member dresses, talks and relates to children and other staff members defines who we are and what we believe. We expect that, as a staff member, you will be a positive role model and a constant example to our campers. All campers deserve a professional, nurturing and loving staff.

DIRECTOR AND DIVISION LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❖ Supervise the daily operations of camp.
- ❖ Help to instruct individual campers who need special guidance.
- ❖ Communicate positively with staff members.
- ❖ Communicate with parents.

SPECIALIST RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❖ Plan a progression of skills to be taught throughout the summer.
- ❖ Create daily and weekly plans taking into account the age, interest and gender of the group.
- ❖ Order materials for their area.
- ❖ Use time wisely, being prepared with equipment and materials prior to each groups' arrival.
- ❖ Provide time during each period for every child to participate and be successful.
- ❖ Organize the group before introducing an activity.
- ❖ Always involve the group counselors in the lesson by giving specific tasks to each counselor.
- ❖ Help campers to participate *"The Right Way"*.
- ❖ Plan special rainy day activities.
- ❖ Maintain and store equipment for the area. Leave the area organized and clean everyday.
- ❖ Help to implement special events.
- ❖ Seek ways to assist in the total success of every day

SENIOR AND ASSISTANT GROUP COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Senior Counselors greet campers and take attendance in the morning. Assistant Counselors and specialists supervise the different areas used during arrival, including the play areas. Even if you know a child will be late, they must be marked absent until they arrive. All late arrivals must be checked in with the office. Always know how many campers are present for the day and be certain to count heads as the group travels through camp. *When the group arrives and before it leaves an activity – count campers.*

- ❖ Develop a positive and appropriate counselor to camper relationship – enjoy each camper and make personal contact with him/her every day. *Every camper deserves validation!*
- ❖ Help campers place camp bags in cubbies and help campers keep track of their belongings.
- ❖ Organizing the group so that campers travel from activity to activity in an orderly way.
- ❖ Help campers to socialize properly.
- ❖ When at activities counselors must divide campers into teams themselves. Allowing campers to “choose teams” becomes a popularity contest.
- ❖ Assist the specialist by actively teaching, encouraging and reinforcing all campers in the planned activities.
- ❖ Senior Counselors should always be with the majority of the group. Assistant Counselors should escort campers to the bathroom and nurse.
- ❖ Interacting positively and respectfully with other staff members. The Senior Counselor will provide direction and guidance for the assistants.
- ❖ Frequently communicate with the Directors and Supervisors.

Group counselors and specialists should not make or receive phone calls from parents – the Director and/or division leader will assume that responsibility. All written communication to parents must be approved by the Director and prepared by the office.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND SPECIAL EVENTS

DAILY SCHEDULE

Staff must be at their work station ready to work by 9:00 am. Flag raising is held at 9:30 am and Flag Lowering takes place at 3:40 pm. Staff not riding buses will wave goodbye to buses at the bottom of the hill. Staff members may not leave campus until all buses have departed, at approximately 4:10 pm. All campers will follow a ten period day. This varies a bit depending on division. Here is a sample day:

 CARDINALS 2022 <i>Catch the Spirit!</i>					
TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00-9:30	ARRIVAL / FREE PLAY				
9:30	FLAG RAISING				
Period 1 9:50-10:25	LANYARD LAND	YOGA	ARTS & CRAFTS	PLAY AREA 3	PLAYLAND PRIDE
Period 2 10:25-11:00	BASEBALL BALLFIELD 1	PLAY AREA 2	ROPES & MATS	WOODSHOP	BASKETBALL
Period 3 11:00-11:35	SWIM	SWIM	SWIM	SWIM	SWIM
Period 4 11:35-12:10	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
Period 5 12:10-12:45	BOATING & FISHING	NATURE	THEATER	WATER WORLD	GO KARTS
Period 6 12:45-1:20	MINING	GOLF	NINJA	TENNIS	PLAY AREA 1
Period 7 1:20-1:55	PLAY AREA 3	SOCCER BALLFIELD 4	DANCE	MUSIC	BASEBALL BALLFIELD 1
Period 8 1:55-2:30	SWIM	SWIM	SWIM	SWIM	SWIM
Period 9 2:30-3:05	SNACK	SNACK	SNACK	SNACK	SNACK
Period 10 3:05-3:40	LEGOMANIA	COOKING	LACROSSE BALLFIELD 4	ARCHERY	BOATING & FISHING
3:40-4:00	FLAG LOWERING / DISMISSAL				

CHOICE PERIODS AND ELECTIVES

Upper Camp groups entering grade 3 and older will participate in Choice Periods. Upper Camp groups entering grade 4 and older will also participate in Electives. Campers will be able to choose from a list of activities each day for Choice Periods. Campers will choose a new Elective each week and attend the same elective for the duration of the week. Group counselors will be assigned to help with these activities.

NEW FOR 2023!

- ❖ *Tremendous!*
- ❖ *Expanded Arts and Crafts patio*
- ❖ *Wondertunes*
- ❖ *Added High Ropes element (Sky Climb)*
- ❖ *More Gaga!*
- ❖ *New Dance Studio*
- ❖ *Salad Bar at lunch*
- ❖ *Electives for grades 4 and up*

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are planned every week. The Special Events Calendar for 2023 is posted on our website. All special activities will be explained in weekly staff notes. Our enthusiasm and participation as a staff make each special event successful.





2023 SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
• SESSION 1 •						
	JUNE 19 New Staff Orientation	20	21 Come & Visit PRE-K ORIENTATION FOR TIGERS, BEARS, CHEETAHS, GRIZZLIES	22	23 All Staff Orientation	24 Come & Visit CAMPER ORIENTATION
25 <i>Week 1</i>	26 Best of 10 Summer 2023 FIRST DAY OF CAMP	27	28 CAMP SPIRIT DAY! PHOTO DAY	29 FOAMTASTIC	30 FILTHY FRIDAY	JULY 1
2 <i>Week 2</i>	3 Red, White & Blue Day CONFETTI FIREWORKS	4 NO CAMP Fourth of July Holiday	5 PLAYLAND OLYMPICS OPENING CEREMONIES	6	7 FINALE	8
9 <i>Week 3</i>	10 Mustache Monday	11 Mystical Adventure BY NACH	12 splash spectacular	13	14 HALLOWEEN DAY	15
16 <i>Week 4</i>	17 NATIONAL S'MORES DAY Almost	18 MYSTERY DAY Wear Your Favorite Team Jersey	19 RUBBER DUCKY DAY LOWER CAMP STAY LATE	20 NO, SNO COMES MIDDLE CAMP STAY LATE	21 GROUP SONGFEST	22
• SESSION 2 •						
23 <i>Week 5</i>	24 MAKE NEW FRIENDS DAY	25 CAMP SPIRIT DAY! PHOTO DAY	26 FOAMTASTIC	27 CHALK IT UP DAY!	28 Birthday Party Day	29
30 <i>Week 6</i>	31 POW! TONIGHT! WATER GARDENS	AUGUST 1 SENIOR BOAT RACE	2 Winter Wet & Wild Wonderland	3	4 CIRCUS DAY	5
6 <i>Week 7</i>	7 NATIONAL S'MORES DAY	8 UPPER CAMP STAY LATE	9 CARNIVAL	10 POOL PARTY!	11 Last Day of Camp HATS OFF TO SUMMER 2023! Counselor Talent Show	12
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Senior Trips Special Programs</p> </div> <div> <p>Week 1 - Bridgeport Adventure Park</p> <p>Week 2 - Ridgebury Farms & Stables Horseback Riding</p> <p>Week 3 - Beach Trip</p> </div> <div> <p>Week 4 - Brownstone Adventure Park</p> <p>Week 5 - Bridgeport Adventure Park</p> <p>Week 6 - Mystery Bus Trip</p> <p>Week 7 - Lake Compounce</p> </div> </div> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: right;">Dates & events subject to change</p>						

SPECIAL FIRST DAY PROCEDURES

"Make New Friends Day" – The first day of camp (Monday, June 26th) and the first day of session 2 (Monday July 24th) are especially important. Greet every camper enthusiastically. Help alleviate fears. Go slowly. Be calm and reassuring. Campers need to learn your name as well as the names of specialists and other campers in the group. Specialists are encouraged to play a name game for the first few minutes of every period. Be certain to include all staff.

- ❖ Campers will arrive wearing name tags that they received on the bus or when they arrive at camp.
- ❖ Group counselors will have Camp Playland backpacks, "bag tags," t-shirts and sweatshirts for each camper.
- ❖ Show campers the bathrooms, water filling stations, group cubbies and changing areas in the shower house.
- ❖ Set aside a time for campers to use the bathroom and get drinks – am and pm *every day* of the summer!
- ❖ Review bus assignments with each camper. This will help facilitate dismissal.

CAMP GROUPS NAMES & AGES

PRE- K Coed 3-4yo Leaders: Vivi and Lynnet	KINDERGARTEN Coed Ent. Kindergarten Leaders: Rachel and Caitlyn	LOWER CAMP Coed Ent 1st grade Leaders: Kimmy and Emma	MIDDLE CAMP BOYS Ent. 2nd grade Leader: Sam
TIGERS	BEAVERS	ROADRUNNERS	EAGLES
BEARS	CHIPMUNKS	COYOTES	BRONCOS
BENGALS	JAGUARS	ROBINS	OWLS
GRIZZLIES	WOODCHUCKS	CARDINALS	MIDDLE CAMP GIRLS
CHEETAHS	PORCUPINES	BOBCATS	Ent. 2nd grade Leader: Rachel
		SEAGULLS	LIONS
UPPER CAMP BOYS Ent. 3rd-6th grade Leader: RJ	UPPER CAMP GIRLS Ent. 3rd-6th grade Leader: Izzy	SUPER SENIORS Coed Ent. 7th-8th grade Leader: Michael Parker	RAVENS
			BLUE JAYS
BADGERS	LEOPARDS		
COUGARS	SANDPIPERS		
EXPLORERS	NAVIGATORS		
MUSTANGS	PANTHERS		
ALL STARS	TRAILBLAZERS		

DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

PARTICIPATION

Our goal is for every camper and counselor to participate at each activity and feel good about their participation. Counselors are expected to be with the group actively instructing, encouraging or simply participating at the children's level. If a child sits out, one counselor should investigate "why". Sometimes the child may feel insecure with the activity, need to observe it first, need a specific "job" or need additional support. If a child needs additional support and/or attention, give it to them. The best way to get a child to participate is to be actively involved yourself and invite the child to join you. If a child still chooses to sit out, you should return to participating. Giving too much attention to a child who chooses to sit out might make it more fun to sit out. *When participating in all the activities at camp, counselors should be mentors and instructors, not competitors. Competing at the counselor's level is unacceptable. Counselors should not monopolize or manipulate children's play.* In team games, campers never choose teams. Dividing into teams is the staff's responsibility.

COUNSELOR TO CAMPER RATIO

We maintain a ratio of one counselor, age sixteen or older, to four children under age six and to six children over age six.

SENIOR CAMP

Super Seniors are entering 7th & 8th grade. Seniors have more flexibility in their program. Seniors leave campus every Thursday for a day trip. Specialists are expected to develop high interest, high level programming for this age group.

CAMPERS WITH SPECIAL SUPPORT

There are campers with identified special needs enrolled at Camp Playland. Some of our special needs campers require more support/supervision than a group counselor is trained to provide. These campers will come to camp with a "special support staff". Support staff may be hired by the camp, the school system where the child attends or the child's parents.

All staff should work to include these campers as much as possible. Whenever appropriate the child should take instructions or corrections from the Senior Counselor and/or specialist working with the group. The special support staff's job is to support the camper to ensure success and participation. If after the whole group instruction, the camper needs additional explanation the special support person will do so. If the activity is too difficult the support staff can help break down or simplify the task to be more attainable for the camper. Only as a last resort will the camper be taken to an alternative activity. If the camper's behavior is prohibitive to their success at camp, it is imperative the Directors are made aware. The Directors will work closely with the parents, special support staff and you to facilitate their success.

Special support staff should be viewed as part of the group and camp staff. They are expected to adhere to all of Camp Playland's staff policies. When appropriate, special support staff should function as a counselor and support all campers, always giving first priority to their "assignment". Special support staff members are not expected to take charge of the group. Additional information we receive about specific needs for individual campers will be shared with you as appropriate. This information is confidential.

SWIMMING

Most groups swim twice a day. A positive swimming experience is crucial to a successful summer. Campers are encouraged to put on a bathing suit and be inside the fenced enclosure. No camper will be forced to swim. Work hard to alleviate anxiety for the reluctant camper. It may take time to get that camper to put on a swimsuit. Have patience; enlist the help of Division Leaders and pool staff.. Never ignore the needs of the reluctant swimmer.

Pool Routine:

- ❖ Arrive to swim on time. If needed leave an activity early, so you will be on time.
- ❖ One counselor must lead the group into the shower house. Help campers find your groups' designated changing area. One counselor should be at the end of the line and be the last to enter the shower house.
- ❖ Counselors and campers will change into bathing suits. Help campers place socks in shoes, then place shoes under the bench. Teach campers how to properly use the changing area. If you establish good routines on day one it will make your summer easier.
- ❖ Encourage campers to use the bathrooms prior to leaving the shower house. .
- ❖ As campers are changed they should leave the shower house and go to their assigned pool.
- ❖ Counselors should continue helping the rest of the campers change. The Senior Counselor must be the last to leave the shower house. The Senior Counselor needs to ensure all campers have left before leaving the shower house. Senior Counselors should direct assistant counselors so every child is helped.
- ❖ Towels should be left in the shower house.
- ❖ Counselors are assigned to a pool station. When the campers are having free swim, counselors stand on the pool deck assisting lifeguards. Counselors do not go into the pool when campers are having free swim.
- ❖ During the lesson counselors will assist the swim instructors. Be prepared to get in and out of the pool. Be prepared to help campers.
- ❖ After swim class, campers will be dismissed to the shower house to change. Counselors will lead the way. After the first swim, the campers will put on a dry bathing suit in preparation for their second swim period. After the second swim campers must put on clothes to wear home. **No one may wear a wet bathing suit around camp.**
- ❖ Help campers change. This will become easier as the summer progresses. All counselors must help. Swim staff will help in the shower house, too.
- ❖ After changing, campers and counselors carry their socks, shoes and backpacks outside to the benches. Each group will be assigned a set of benches.
- ❖ Counselors will assist campers in putting on socks and shoes. Check campers bags for sunscreen and assist in applying it. Campers may not share sunscreen. **Please do not rush campers.**

A typical swim period is:

- ❖ Camper free swim
- ❖ Camper safety whistle – conducted by the lifeguards
- ❖ Camper safety check – sitting on side of pool
- ❖ Short lesson and practice
- ❖ Camper safety check – sitting on side of pool
- ❖ Camper free swim – all counselors out of pool to assist lifeguards
- ❖ Camper safety whistle
- ❖ Camper safety check – sitting on side of pool
- ❖ Campers dismissed to the shower house led by counselors



PLAY AREAS

Campers will be introduced to the different play areas at camp through their schedule rotation. If the play area is not used properly it may become dangerous. When your group uses a play area for the first time, review the playing options. Before the campers begin to play, the Senior Counselor must position staff for supervision. Triangulate the playground so that counselors are positioned for maximum safety. Every child should be within the eyesight of a counselor. The Senior Counselor should have “Big Eyes” and view the group in its entirety. Assistant Counselors should escort children to the bathroom and/or nurse. **The Senior Counselor must always stay with the majority of the group.**

Running in the play area is prohibited as it can be unsafe. Except for the youngest campers, counselors may not push children on the swings. Campers must use equipment only for its designated use (i.e. shovels are for digging only). When the period is over, counselors should help campers to return equipment to its proper location for the next group. The water used at the waterways is for play only, not drinking. All waterways should be turned off before the group leaves the play area.

There may be two groups scheduled to use Play Area 3 (“Curly Slide”, “Treemendous”) during each period. If you cannot properly supervise all the areas, it is appropriate to “close” an area.

TREEMENDOUS

- ❖ Campers using Treemendous must be 3 years or older.
- ❖ Staff must monitor groups and ensure campers are being safe. Activity is off limits without proper supervision.
- ❖ A counselor must be the first person on the top platform. The counselor on the platform (the “going up” platform) will act as the big eyes. They must supervise the net and the campers going up and down.
- ❖ A second counselor must be stationed on the bottom deck. Their job is to space out and control campers going up on the right side and down on the left side.
- ❖ If a third counselor is available, they will be stationed on the second platform (the “going down” platform) and monitor the net and campers going down. When going down, campers must wait until the person in front of them has passed the wooden step down. This will help space out campers and prevent potential collisions.
- ❖ If a camper does not want to go on the net, they may join a group in Play Area 3. If there is not a group in Play Area 3, a counselor must supervise campers who do not wish to go on the net.
- ❖ You must count your group before and after the activity to make sure you have the correct number of campers.

RAINY DAYS

Rainy days may require extra patience from everyone, but they can be special fun for campers because of the change in routine. If it rains during the day, bring your group to the nearest covered area. Organize your group in a circle and play quiet games until a special schedule is implemented. *Be prepared to keep your group busy during a rain delay.* We will adhere to regular scheduling as much as possible. Because summer weather can be changeable, it is not unusual to flip back and forth from sunny to rainy day schedules.

Wearing rain gear is helpful on rainy days – always have campers check their bags for rain gear.

LUNCH, WATER AND SNACKS

Lunch, catered by FLIK Catering will be provided to campers and counselors every day. A menu can be found on the camp website. Everyone is encouraged to eat a well-rounded lunch everyday. We will have alternate food for people with special diets and for the picky eater. Everyone is provided water at lunch. An afternoon snack is provided daily.

Counselors sit with and interact with their assigned group throughout lunch. Counselors should space out amongst the campers. Senior Counselors should sit at the head of the table so they can see the entire group.

Campers and counselors may not carry water, coffee, soda or other food items around the campground. Chewing gum is not allowed for campers and counselors. Water stations are situated throughout camp and campers are encouraged to visit them. Campers and counselors must stay well hydrated.

Camp Playland is a peanut/nut sensitive environment. This is in response to the fact that a small, but significant number of campers are seriously allergic to peanuts and/or other nuts. Campers and counselors should not bring peanut butter or other peanut/nut products to camp. Because nut products may be hidden in foods, campers may not share foods, but should eat what is served by the camp. Campers celebrating summer birthdays will not bring treats to share with their groups. We will recognize their birthdays in a non-food way.

CAMPER USE OF BATHROOMS

Bathrooms are located throughout the Playland campus. Young children should be brought to the facilities at least twice daily. Young campers should be escorted to the bathroom by a counselor, but staff members should never enter a closed bathroom with a camper. Wait outside. If a camper needs help in the bathroom, enlist the aid of a Division Leader. If a very young child (Pre-K & K) needs help, be sure the door to the bathroom is left open and have a second staff person within eyesight of the bathroom. Anyone who assists a child in a bathroom must keep the door open and have a second pair of counselor eyes nearby. This is for your protection and will avoid any accusations of staff misconduct. Older campers can use the bathrooms independently. When in doubt enlist the aid of the Director or a Division Leader.

Staff must monitor bathrooms closely and report any inappropriate behavior. A counselor must maintain visual contact with the bathroom area when campers are utilizing the facilities. Only one camper may occupy a bathroom stall at a time. If a counselor notices that a bathroom is not clean, they should tell a Division Leader or Director immediately.

If a camper needs a change of clothes, please ask the Director or a Division Leader for help. Spare clothing is available in the Nurse's Office, Pool, and Pre-K building. If a child has a bathroom accident, it is important a Division Leader is told so they may communicate with the child's parents.

STAFF AREA/BATHROOMS

Staff may use any bathroom around campus. "Staff only" bathrooms are located in the lower level of the office building. This area is for staff only. If a staff member *must* make a phone call, a landline phone for staff use is available in this area as well. Cell phones may be used only in this area.

TRANSPORTATION

BUS

Some counselors are assigned to be lead or general "Bus Counselor." This is an important responsibility as you help campers ride safely and you are the person parents see daily.

Bus counselors are responsible for:

- ❖ Placing a name tag on each camper on their first day at camp.
- ❖ The bus counselor must know how many campers are on the bus. At the end of the day you will take attendance before the bus departs camp. Buses do not leave campus until every camper is properly situated.
- ❖ Getting off the bus at each stop to greet each camper by name daily. Often the bus counselor is the only representative of the camp a parent or caregiver might meet. It is important to be friendly, polite and attentive.
REMEMBER – you are the first contact a camper has with Camp Playland everyday!
- ❖ Helping campers cross the street.
- ❖ Helping campers find an appropriate seat – save a few front seats for Pre-K and Kindergarten children.
- ❖ Aiding campers in buckling up – campers and counselors must wear seat belts.
- ❖ Waiting at a bus stop until the scheduled pickup time – **DO NOT LEAVE EARLY.**
- ❖ Waiting in the afternoon until a parent is at the bus stop to receive campers – **NEVER LEAVE A CAMPER UNATTENDED.**
- ❖ Lead bus counselors are responsible for the camp GPS trackers.



Bus Safety:

- ❖ Every person riding the bus must use seat belts.
- ❖ The bus counselor should work cooperatively with the bus driver. The driver will have a radio to communicate with the bus depot. The bus counselor should have a cell phone readily available for emergency communication.
- ❖ No one (including counselors) should eat on the bus. This is to avoid choking and allergy concerns.
- ❖ At orientation, all staff members will be trained in the use of the Epipen™. If a camper riding your bus requires an Epipen™ for an allergic reaction, you will receive additional training. The camper's parents will hand you the Epipen™ when the camper gets on the bus. Upon arrival at camp, you will leave this Epipen™ in the nurse's office for the day and pick it up from the nurse at the end of the day for the ride home. When the camper leaves the bus you will give the Epipen™ back to the parent. If you use the Epipen™ you or the driver will call 911.

PARENT TRANSPORTATION

Some campers are transported to and from camp by parents. They will be received by staff and brought to their designated areas. In the afternoon they will be dismissed from the picnic pavilion. Campers driven by parents are picked up after the buses depart. Camp Playland offers early drop off starting at 8:00 am and late pick up until 5:30 pm.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Establish simple and necessary rules for campers that will enable them to enjoy a safe summer. Be consistent and clear with your expectations. State your desired outcome in a positive way. For example, rather than telling the group “No running,” tell them to walk.

Always correct campers individually and privately. Correcting a camper in front of peers will cause embarrassment. PRACTICE PATIENCE; correcting poor behavior takes time and effort on the part of all staff members. It is our job to anticipate potential problems and structure for success. Guide campers to engage in “Peer Problem Solving” techniques, where they negotiate and compromise with their friends.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline means guidance and should not be punitive. Never punish a camper by denying them a favorite activity or snack. Discipline at camp means discussing concerns with the camper, teaching the camper to participate “*The Right Way*” and redirecting campers when appropriate. Anticipating discipline issues is a good teaching technique. Engaging campers in appropriate activities and participating at the camper's level will prevent many disciplinary problems. Yelling is not acceptable at Camp Playland for discipline or group management. If necessary, the use of a stern voice, with appropriate facial expression, is much more effective and acceptable. Never allow one camper to negatively impact the good time of another camper or the entire group. Some campers require extra attention and nurturing. It is encouraged to concentrate more attention on that camper to enhance the overall success of the group.

Above all, don't allow a situation to grow out of control. Long before the critical stage, enlist help from the director or a Division Leader.

All staff members should give verbal direction, model proper participation and behavior and correct when necessary. Assistant staff members should never discipline a camper. If a child needs additional direction or correction assistant staff members should defer to the Senior Counselor. If a child is rude to a staff member – a simple statement from the counselor should be “I do not like that”. Walk away from the camper and inform your Senior Counselor and/or your group's Division Leader.

TEASING/SARCASM

Counselors may never engage in teasing or taunting of campers or fellow staff members. All staff must maintain a professional relationship with campers. Campers are young children and young children are very literal. Using a nickname may seem innocent to you, but can be misinterpreted by campers. Do not engage in teasing behavior with other staff members either. Whether or not you intend to involve campers in staff relations, they will become involved. You must maintain professional relationships with fellow staff members at all times while on campus.

TECHNIQUES TO ENCOURAGE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

- ❖ Make rules clear and tell campers what you expect from them
- ❖ Set good examples for respect, cooperation and teamwork
- ❖ Provide opportunities for success
- ❖ Give constant praise and recognize good behavior
- ❖ Maintain routines as much as possible
- ❖ Support fellow staff members
- ❖ Make each child feel special – each child is special
- ❖ Understand what is happening before you intervene
- ❖ Intervene early and before the child loses control
- ❖ Ask for help and support when you need it
- ❖ Speak effectively:
 - o At the child's eye level
 - o Change voice and tone to reflect your request
 - o Use clear, direct and unemotional commands
 - o Don't ask – tell



SOCIAL CRUELTY (BULLYING)

Camp Playland has a zero tolerance for the insidious societal problem of “Social Cruelty”, better known as bullying. “Bullying is when one or more people exclude, tease, taunt, gossip, hit, kick or put down another person. Bullying happens when one person or a group of people try to exert power or control over other people.”

Camp Playland promotes proper social relationships amongst campers and amongst staff members. We believe in “peer problem solving” where individuals negotiate and compromise for the benefit of all. Bullying in any form is unacceptable and we work to have a community where all are accepted and can have fun.

All staff members at Camp Playland must follow these procedures:

1. Create a safe physical and emotional environment for your campers and for each other. Be sure campers and co-workers know you will not tolerate cruelty towards others. **A counselor experiencing bullying should communicate with a Division Leader.**
2. If a camper reports an incidence of bullying, embrace that child and validate his/her feelings. That child may feel hurt, sad and angry.
3. The “bully” must be told clearly that bullying will not be tolerated. The staff person must be careful not to “bully” the person accused of “bullying”. A simple, firm statement of what is not acceptable is sufficient.
4. If the incident is not resolved or repeats itself a Division Leader should be informed to evaluate and correct the problem.
5. The Division Leader will communicate with parents.

Campers and staff must know that teasing, exclusion, bullying, rumor, ganging up will not be tolerated. **Campers and staff members must feel safe and protected at Camp Playland.**

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS (E.A.Ps)

At all times group counselors will remain with their group and maintain an accurate count of campers. The Director and Division Leaders will make phone calls and implement any required emergency plans. *Please read carefully as we do not practice E.A.Ps with campers.*

SAFETY

Accidents are best prevented when activities are well supervised. Think ahead to problem areas and anticipate how to prevent accidents.

If a camper is ill or injured, they must see the nurse. Never ignore a camper's complaints; don't belittle a child's concerns or try to diagnose an illness. An Assistant Counselor should escort young campers to the nurse. If a camper is seriously injured and should not be moved, send an Assistant Counselor to get the nurse or a Division Leader. In the event of an injury, remember your emotions and actions impact your campers. Remain calm and reassuring.

ALLERGIES

Prior to the first day of camp, you will be made aware of medical alerts for campers in your group. Please pay close attention to all allergies, including insect allergies (bees, etc.). Food allergies (some life threatening) are becoming more prevalent. *Never allow campers to share food! Strictly monitor the diet of campers with food allergies.* If you are uncertain whether or not a camper should eat a lunch item or a snack or any food, check with the Director or a Division Leader. Counselors and campers should never bring in candy, gum or other food treats. Food is only eaten at lunch and snack.

All medications brought to camp are stored in the Nurse's Office and dispensed by the nurse.

EPIPEN PROTOCOL

1. All EpiPens™ to be kept at Camp Playland will be stored in the nurse's office in a locked cabinet. "Authorization for Administration of Medicines" form will be completed by the parent, doctor and camp.
2. In the case a parent requests the EpiPen™ stay with the camper at all times, the parent will send in a second set of EpiPens™ with additional paperwork indicating the request signed by the parent, doctor and camp.
3. The second set will be kept in a designated and labeled "fanny pack." A walkie talkie will also be in the fanny pack. The fanny pack will be kept in the locked cabinet in the nurse's office outside of camp hours. Upon arrival, the designated Senior Counselor will retrieve the fanny pack from the nurse's office and will keep it on their person at all times during the camp day. At the end of the day the fanny pack will be returned to the nurse's office to be locked away overnight.
4. In the event it is determined the camper is having an anaphylactic reaction a Division Leader will be notified by walkie talkie as will the camp nurse. If it is deemed necessary by the Senior Counselor, the EpiPen™ will be administered. 911 will be called as will the parent.

LOST CAMPER POLICY

You must count campers after every transition. If a camper is missing, notify the Director or the nearest Division Leader. The Director or Division Leader will notify the other Division Leaders via walkie-talkie. An immediate canvassing of the camp will take place starting out from the four corners in. The pool and pond staff will be notified to check their areas. If after a thorough search the missing camper is not found the police and the camper's parents will be notified immediately. If you find a camper separated from a group, notify the Director or a Division Leader who will return the camper to the appropriate group.

NEVER release a camper to anyone without the express permission of the Director or a Division Leader. The Director and Division Leaders will not release a camper without first clearing it with the office.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CAMPERS

Counselors and campers may engage in appropriate contact, such as hand holding. Campers should never sit on a counselor's lap, instead have a camper sit next to you. This is for your protection. To prevent accidents and injuries, counselors should never pick up campers. A counselor may get down to the camper's level for a hug or nurturing gesture.

CAMP INJURY/SEVERE ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

1. In the event of a severe accident at camp, immediately notify the Nurse and a Director/Head Counselor. If the camper is unconscious, the nurse or Director will call 911 immediately.
2. The Nurse will administer first aid. Do not move the injured party unless they are in immediate danger.
3. Instruct other staff members to remove other campers from the immediate scene. The nurse and a Director or Division Leader should remain at the scene with the camper.
4. If the camper is conscious, the nurse will decide if an ambulance is necessary. If an ambulance is called, the camper will be brought to the bottom of the hill if possible. If the camper is brought to a hospital by EMS for treatment, a Director, nurse, or Division Leader will accompany the camper in the ambulance. If feasible, a copy of the camper's health records will be given to the EMS and a Director, nurse, or Division Leader will contact the camper's parents.
5. Nurses will complete and submit an incident report for the state.

SEVERE WEATHER PLAN

In the case of severe weather (thunder storms, hurricane, tornado or high winds) counselors should bring the group to the nearest enclosed building – the office, downstairs below the office, the Pre-K building, the Arts & Crafts room, the Kindergarten building. Be certain to take an accurate headcount and remain inside until further notice.

In case of other emergencies (fire, earthquake, or a nearby but not on campus emergency situation) counselors will remain with their group. Bring the group to the Picnic Pavilion. Be certain to count heads and account for every camper. Sit with campers and await further direction from the Director or a Division Leader.

CAMPUS SECURITY /VIOLENT CRIME ACTION PLAN

The only entrance/exit to the Playland campus is monitored by security/visitor check-in. There are cameras located around the Playland campus. In case of an emergency, the New Canaan Police Department will be contacted by calling

911. Parents will be notified via email by Camp Directors. If the Camp Playland facility needs to be evacuated, counselors will walk campers, in an orderly manner, to West Elementary School located on Ponus Ridge, opposite Camp Playland.

If there is an act of violent crime on campus, an alert will go out on all walkie-talkies, **“ACTIVE SHOOTER.”**. Counselors will lead campers to the nearest wooded area to hide. Leave all personal belongings behind. Including specialists, Camp Playland has a 1:2 counselor to camper ratio. Campers with special needs will remain with their support staff. All staff will support campers in this scenario. Continue hiding until you receive instructions from a camp Director or police officer.

GENERAL STAFF PROTOCOLS

CONDUCT

How staff conduct their personal relationships is personal and personal relationships should not interfere with job responsibilities. Your personal conduct outside of camp should not affect your work. Staff are expected to be well rested and energetic so you can care for the campers to the best of your abilities. Staff are expected to set a good example to campers when responding to authority and being respectful to others. Campers may address counselors/staff by their first name.

The use of alcohol or drugs (including marijuana) on camp property or working under the influence of drugs and alcohol is prohibited and is grounds for termination.

DRESS

Campers and counselors should dress comfortably. Sneakers or sturdy shoes with backs should be worn. Counselors may not wear sandals or Crocs®. Every counselor will receive complimentary Playland t-shirts and tank tops. Staff members are required to wear a Camp Playland t-shirt every day.

Swimsuits must be worn at the pool. It is strongly recommended that female counselors wear one piece swimsuits. Any two-piece swimsuit worn must have appropriate coverage (belly button should not be exposed). Staff members should wear a shirt except at the pool area.

As a role model and representative of our camp, counselor attire should be neat and appropriate for working with young children.

PHONES/ELECTRONICS

USE OF CELL PHONES IS PROHIBITED ON THE PLAYLAND CAMPUS. Texting, emailing, talking on the phone, taking photos, using the internet and all social media apps while working with campers is grounds for termination. ***The one exception is for bus counselors who may need to communicate with the camp while traveling on bus routes.***

If a staff member must make a phone call, a landline phone for staff use is located in the lower level of the office building. Cell phones may be used only in this area. If a person needs to call you they can call 203-966-2937 and leave a message with the office. We will deliver the message to you.

INTERNET SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING

Camp Playland respects the rights of employees to use social networks and blogs as a medium of self-expression. If a Playland employee chooses to identify themselves as an employee of our camp on a social networking site, email, text or blog (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc...) some readers of such websites or blogs may view the employee as a representative or spokesperson of our camp. In light of that possibility, Playland requires, as a condition of employment at our camp, that employees observe the following guidelines when referring to the camp, its programs or activities, its campers, and/or other employees, in a blog or on a website.

PLEASE REVIEW CAREFULLY:

1. *Camp Playland is on Facebook/Instagram. If you chose to follow Camp Playland, please look carefully at your privacy settings. Current campers and their parents as well as prospective families will visit our pages. Please limit access to your personal information.*
 2. Employees must be respectful in all communications or blogs related to or referencing the camp, its campers and/or other employees.
 3. Employees must not use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language.
 4. Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to disparage the camp, campers or other employees of the camp.
 5. Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to harass, bully, or intimidate other employees or campers.
 - ❖ Behaviors that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, color, or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another employee or camper.
 6. Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to discuss engaging in conduct that is prohibited by camp policies, including, but not limited to, the use of alcohol and drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment and bullying.
 7. Employees must not post pictures of campers or other employees on a website or in any type of internet communication without obtaining written permission. *The only pictures of campers to be posted are those taken by the photographer and posted on our official website and Facebook/Instagram page.*
 8. The use of our copyrighted Camp Playland name or logo is not allowed without written permission.
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An employee found to be in violation of any portion of this Social Networking and Blogging Policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, a negative job reference or not being asked to return in future summers.

SMOKING/VAPING

Camp Playland is a no smoking/vaping facility. There is no area where smoking/vaping is permitted on campus.

GOLF CARTS

Golf carts are to be used only by designated staff and must be driven with extreme caution. Campers always have the right of way. A counselor must have permission from a Director or Division Leader to use a golf cart. Keys must be taken out of ignition when golf carts are not in use.

ABSENCES FROM WORK

Consistent attendance is expected by all staff members. In the event of an unexpected absence due to illness, please notify us as early as possible. There are no paid days off.

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Counselors not riding camp buses must be at their assigned area by 9:00 am. Earlier is better. At dismissal, the buses must be off camp property before staff members go to their cars. Please gather at the camp exit to wave goodbye to campers. On a typical day all staff will be dismissed by 4:10 pm.

VISITORS

Campus is closed to visitors during the camp day.

STAFF MEETINGS

Division heads will meet with counselors during the camp day when necessary. Division heads will find time during arrival to notify staff of any changes in the schedule, special events, etc.

EVALUATIONS/JOB PERFORMANCE

Division Leaders and Directors will evaluate staff and provide feedback throughout the summer. The Directors are eager to hear suggestions and ideas. Please share information frequently with Directors or Division Leaders. Towards the end of the summer you will be e-mailed an evaluation survey to complete. It is important that you are happy. Happy counselors means happy campers.

PAY DAY

Staff are paid three times during the summer; Saturday July 8th, Saturday July 22nd, and Saturday August 12th.

Direct deposit is strongly encouraged. If you would like to arrange for direct deposit, the form can be found in the online staff portal.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT, STATUTES AND REGULATIONS FOR YOUTH CAMP LICENSING

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

If a staff person suspects that a camper or fellow staff member has suffered abuse or neglect, the Director or a Division Leader must be informed. This information will be documented in the nurse's log and reviewed by the nurse and the Director. Suspected child abuse or neglect will be reported to the DCF Child Abuse Hotline as soon as practicable but not later than 12 hours after the mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm; 1-800-842-2288.

After an oral report is filed, the Director will follow regulations as outlined in the Statutes and Regulations for Youth Camp Licensing. Definitions of child abuse are in the state regulations. The regulations are on file in the camp office.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The Owner/Directors of Playland Day Camp and Nursery School have embraced Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In keeping with this policy, no conduct toward any employee which may be viewed as harassing, discriminatory, intimidating, offensive, violent, abusive, or otherwise improper will be tolerated. The management of Playland Day Camp and Nursery School reserves the right to discipline any employee who violates the spirit of this federal law. Disciplinary action may include job termination.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is sometimes described as unsolicited advances. It may range from inappropriate sexual suggestions to coerced sexual relations. Harassment is viewed as a situation in which an individual in a position to control, influence, or affect another's employment, compensation, promotion, or job assignments uses that power to coerce a person into sexual contact or relations or punishes the refusal. The harasser may be the victims' employer, supervisor, co-worker, or employee. Sexual harassment may also include:

- ❖ *Unsolicited verbal sexual comments*
- ❖ *Subtle pressure for sexual activity*
- ❖ *Sexist remarks about a person's body or sexual activities*
- ❖ *Patting, pinching, or unnecessary touching;*
- ❖ *Demanding sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats involving one's employment, compensation, promotion or job assignment*
- ❖ *Physical assault*
- ❖ *Displaying or passing around posters, pictures, screen saver, e-mail, or other printed materials in the workplace which might be sexual or otherwise offensive to other employees*

❖ *Making jokes, insults, or comments in the presence of others who may find it offensive*

The sexual harassment policy includes all eight of the above statements that occur between non supervisory employees as well as those who are employed as staff in this program.

COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All complaints must be reported to Directors. Any complaint or report of harassment is serious and will be acted upon promptly. As Directors of this program we accept full responsibility to maintain a harassment free work environment. To that end, we will:

- *Investigate the complaint with objectivity and fairness.*
- *Request written statements as well as a verbal accounting of the allegation.*
- *Conduct interviews with the complainant as well as any witnesses.*
- *Attempt to maintain confidentiality as is practical.*
- *Interview the alleged offender individually as well as with the complainant if deemed appropriate.*

Immediately following our investigation, if it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to impose an appropriate resolution to the incident.